



Volume 4, Issue 2

ABILENE HOUSING AUTHORITY

Newsletter Date:

April 30, 2011

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Special Points of Interest:

HCV Tenants & LL's: We are still searching for two tenants. All landlord spots are filled on our HCV Advisory Committee. If you are interested, contact [Brandy Cockrell @ 325-676-6385 ext. 6389](mailto:Brandy.Cockrell@abileneha.org) or at brandy.cockrell@abileneha.org.

Landlords: Rent increases should be submitted to AHA 60-90 days prior to your tenant's recertification date. If you are unaware of these dates, contact [Brandy Cockrell @ 325-676-6385 ext. 6389](mailto:Brandy.Cockrell@abileneha.org) or email her at: brandy.cockrell@abileneha.org.

REMINDER!

Landlords: are responsible for enforcing their lease & collecting the tenant's rental portion.

Tenants: are responsible for paying their portion of the rent to the landlord by the date agreed upon in the lease.

Landlords: it is illegal to charge Housing Choice Voucher participants more in rent than you charge your open market tenants.

Tenants: removing the battery from a smoke detector is a safety risk. In addition, check to make sure that your smoke detectors are working properly. If not, bring it to your landlord's attention immediately.

Landlords & Tenants: landlords &/or tenants are not allowed to change who pays for utilities without the approval of Abilene Housing Authority.



March/April 2011: *Abilene Housing Authority*

NAHRO Legislative Session: *A Day on Capitol Hill!*

On March 29, 2011, Abilene Housing Authority Board of Commissioner (*Mica Jones* - pictured in middle) & *Paul Falade* - CFO (pictured on left) & *Gene Reed* - Executive Director (pictured on right) visited the House & Senate Buildings while on Capitol Hill. While there they visited Congressman Neugebauer's & Senator Cornyn's offices to share their concerns with the proposed FY 2011 budget cuts.



Family Self-Sufficiency: *AHA Receives Grant!!*

In March 2011 HUD awarded Abilene Housing Authority (AHA) with the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Grant! The Grant provides funding for a full-time FSS Coordinator. AHA presently administers the FSS program and has 30 participants. These participants voluntarily decided to join FSS program because they want to become financially self-sufficient! The

HCV FSS program is designed to assist HCV participants to become financially self-sufficient & potentially independent of the assisted program altogether! AHA has had several families graduate from the FSS program over the past few years that completed all of their goals & are now completely independent of assistance from our program! Last year AHA increased the size of the program to 30 participants from the original five participants. In the coming years we will see more self-sufficient graduates!



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Direct Deposit Payments

Landlords: Do you know about our Direct Deposit program? It allows for your Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) to be electronically deposited into your bank account on the first business day of the month! Not only does it give you quicker access to your money, but it is also more cost-effective for the AHA. The process to get set-up is quick and easy. For more information on "Direct Deposit" contact **Paul Falade** (CFO) at 325-676-6385 ext. 5320 or email him at paul.falade@abileneha.org.

"The only way of finding the limits of the possible is by going beyond them into the impossible."

Arthur C. Clarke



Abilene Housing Authority Family Self-Sufficiency Program

Assisting families to achieve financial self-sufficiency. For more information about this program contact **Brandy Cockrell** at 325-676-6385 ext. 6389 or email her at brandy.cockrell@abileneha.org.

Interested in Applying? *Online Application*

AHA has online applications for interested applicants on its website. When you access our website at (www.abileneha.org) click on the second tab and follow the easy-to-use process. You can choose from the Public Housing Waiting Lists and/or the Housing Choice Voucher Waiting List. Once you complete the online application you are automatically placed on the Waiting List (s) of your choice!



AHA: *Name & Logo Added to Building Facade!*



Have you seen it? AHA added its name to the side of the building at 534 Cypress St.! The new signage provides clear identification of our Housing Choice Voucher office and proudly displays our new logo! AHA looks forward to doing business with you!

New Board of Commissioner: *David Mukire!*

David currently lives in the Riviera Apartments. He has been a resident of public housing since October 2007. He is 28 years old and lives with two brothers Gedeon age 31 and Roger age 22. David and his brothers moved to Abilene from their home in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2007.



David has worked in the hotel service and the manufacturing industry while living in Abilene. Currently David attends Cisco Junior College full-time in the field of Computer Information. David's goal is to complete his associate degree and seek employment in computer information technology field.

David's goal in coming to the United States was to seek freedom and the opportunities of obtaining an education to better himself and the lives of his family.





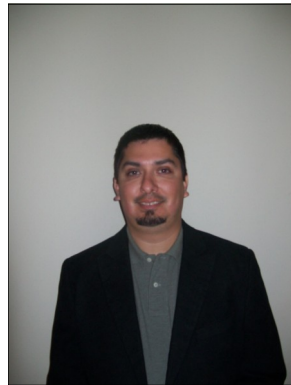
New Employees: *Cynthia, John David & Tim!*

“If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put foundations under them.”

Henry David Thoreau



Please join AHA in welcoming its three new employees to the TEAM! Cynthia Rodriguez (pictured on top) is the new Procurement/Compliance Coordinator. John David Alonzo (pictured in middle) is the new Public Housing Manager & Tim Pittman (pictured on bottom) is our new Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Housing Counselor/ Inspector. Each new employee brings a unique set of skills that will assist Abilene Housing Authority in carrying out its Mission Statement of “...servicing the housing needs of low-income families in AHA’s jurisdiction...”



Feel free to join AHA in welcoming them aboard! If you need to contact them here’s their contact information:



- Cynthia Rodriguez: cynthia.rodriguez@abileneha.org
(325) 676-6385 ext. 6332
- John David Alonzo: johndavid.alonzo@abileneha.org
(325) 676-6032
- Tim Pittman: tim.pittman@abileneha.org
(325) 676-6385 ext. 6322

HUD-VASH PROGRAM

The HUD-VASH program is designed to assist Homeless Veterans find counseling through the VAMC and housing with rental assistance provided by AHA. 46 Families have been housed so far!



Continued Training for Staff: *Increasing our Knowledge!*



John English (Asst. Manager Public Housing) attended Maintenance Workshop training.

Tim Pittman attended HCV HQS Inspections training.



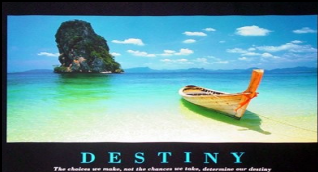


“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, therefore, is not an act but a habit.”

Aristotle

ARRA UPDATE:

AHA
expended
100% of its
\$391,884
ARRA Grant
award in
2010!



DESTINY!

Job Opportunities: *Always Seeking Go-Getters!*



Abilene Housing Authority (AHA) has the following job opening(s):

[HCV Family Self-Sufficiency Coordinator](#)

Visit our website @ www.abileneha.org for detailed job description.

Housing Authorities to Celebrate Father’s Day: *AHA Will Host in Abilene*

AHA to Host a Father’s Day Celebration for Public Housing Residents!

Being a dad has been my single-greatest experience in my life which is why I never overlook or undervalue the importance any father. Unfortunately, today’s statistics tell us that far too many fathers are absent in their children’s lives. In an effort to help more fathers connect with their children who live in public housing, HUD is asking housing authorities across the U.S. to host *Father’s Day 2011* on Saturday, June 18th. That day will be a celebration of fatherhood, family and an opportunity to link these men to education, employment, health and many other support services. After everything is said and done, we’re hoping to encourage fathers to stay connected with their kids.

The NBA, NFL, and many nationally recognized organizations are joining HUD, other government agencies and the housing authorities to make this day a success for both fathers and their children.

AHA Website: *Promoting Business Opportunities!*

Businesses interested in working with AHA are invited to visit our website. AHA added the “Business Opportunities” section to its website in 2009 to offer a variety of procurement information to the public. In addition to providing printable versions of current RFP’s, IFB’s and RFQ’s, this section of the website provides information on becoming a vendor, contracting requirements, cooperative purchasing affiliations, Minority Business Enterprises and Women’s Business Enterprises (MBE/WBE’s), and Section 3 of the HUD Act of 1968.

Section 3 is a policy for providing preference to low and very low-income residents of the community and the businesses that employ these persons; without consideration of race or gender. AHA has included a model plan on its website for businesses to follow.

For more information concerning business opportunities and Section 3, please contact Brandy Cockrell at 325-676-6385 ext. 6389 or email her at brandy.cockrell@abileneha.org.





AHA — Providing Homes for Families

ABILENE HOUSING AUTHORITY

534 Cypress Street
Suite #200
Abilene, TX 79601

Phone: 325-676-6385
Fax: 325-676-6375

Customer Service Email Address:
helpdesk@abileneha.org



Mission Statement:

The Housing Authority's mission is to service the housing needs of low-income families in the Authority's jurisdiction in order to enhance self-sufficiency and promote community quality of life and economic viability.

Vision Statement:

We will be recognized as a leading authority in moderate and low-income community development activities in West Texas.

We're on the web: <http://www.abileneha.org>

AHA Board of Commissioners - Contact Email Addresses:

Larry Holmes - **Chair** - larryholmes@aol.com

Vanessa Faz - **Vice-Chair** - vfaz@ffin.com

Kiddy Boswell - **Secretary** - ksbabor@swbell.net

Mica Jones - **Board Commissioner** - semica.jones@gmail.com

David Mukire - **Resident Commissioner** - dmukire@ymail.com

Executive Director - Contact Email Address:

Gene Reed - **Executive Director** - gene.reed@abileneha.org

